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April 15, 2008

**VIA ELECTRONIC & US MAIL** 

Ms. Alice Yeh
ATTN: Lower Passaic River Remedial Project Manager
Emergency and Remedial Response Division
U.S. EPA, Region 2
290 Broadway, 19th Floor
New York, New York 10007

Re: Monthly Progress Report No. 11 – March 2008
Lower Passaic River Study Area (LPRSA) Remedial Investigation/
Feasibility Study (RI/FS)
CERCLA Docket No. 02-2007-2009

Dear Ms. Yeh:

de maximis, inc. is submitting this Monthly Progress Report for the above-captioned project on the behalf of the RI/FS Agreement Settling Parties (Cooperative Parties Group or CPG) pursuant to the Administrative Settlement Agreement and Order on Consent (Settlement Agreement or AOC). The Progress Report satisfies the reporting requirements of Paragraph 42 of said Settlement Agreement.

(a) Actions which have been taken to comply with this Settlement Agreement during the previous month.

# Meetings/Conference Calls

- On March 4, 2008 CPG and EPA held a teleconference to follow up on the February 27, 2008 Scoping Meeting.
- On March 12, 2008 CPG and EPA held a teleconference to discuss potential coring locations and segmentation schemes for the 2008 low resolution coring program.

### Correspondence

 On March 5, 2008 CPG submitted the MDL study for the proposed high resolution GC/MC method for pesticides to EPA by e-mail. Ms. A. Yeh LPRSA RI/FS - Progress Report No.11 – March 2008 April 15, 2008 Page 2 of 4

- On March 12, 2008 EPA sent CPG an e-mail indicating the MDL study for the proposed high resolution GC/MC method for pesticides was approved by EPA.
- On March 12, EPA send CPG an e-mail that included a LPR QAPP modification for the use of freezing sediment samples to extend sample holding times for certain parameters;
- On March 18, 2008 CPG sent EPA figures with preliminary locations for coring during the 2008 sampling.
- On March 20, 2008 CPG contacted EPA by phone and discussed the plan for collecting and segmenting cores during the proposed 2008 coring program.
- On March 26, 2008 CPG sent an e-mail to Malcolm Pirnie Inc. (MPI) requesting the locations of the cores that MPI collected in Dundee Lake and LPR tributaries.
- On March 26, 2008 CPG sent MPI an e-mail requesting information on the approach used to ensure coring locations were clear of obstructions. MPI responded to this request via e-mail the same day.
- On March 31, 2008, EPA sent CPG a series of narratives describing RI sampling conducted in 2005 and 2008, notes and observations about the sediments types at the head of tide for each tributary and a memo providing rationale for the core segmentation.

#### Work

- CPG has been working to develop a revised sediment coring program following the February 27, 2008 Scoping Meeting with EPA and Partner Agencies. The revised plan will focus on collection of low resolution sediment cores throughout the entire study area.
- CPG continued to revise the Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) drafted for the 2007 Sediment Grab Sampling Program to reflect the revisions to the sediment sampling program.
- CPG continued to process and analyze bathymetry and topography data.
   This work includes processing the 2007 multi-beam survey data, conducting depth differencing with historical data, and developing representative cross sections.
- CPG is reviewing the Draft Feasibility Study Work Plan internally and anticipates submission to the EPA in the near future pending discussions on ongoing early action feasibility work.
- CPG continued to develop a framework for conducting the risk assessment and is awaiting receipt of the EPA/Partner Agencies' comments on the 2006 Field Sampling Plan (FSP) Volume 2.



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CPG is working to update and the LPRSA Conceptual Site Model. This
work includes assessing historical and recent sediment contaminant data,
a review of sediment stability and erosion, and an assessment of tides and
currents.

## (b) Results of Sampling and Tests

 On March 5, 2008 CPG provided EPA with the results of the TestAmerica MDL Study for the CPG's proposed high resolution GC/MS method for pesticides.

# (c) Work planned for the next two months with schedules relating to the overall project schedule for RI/FS completion

- CPG anticipates submitting a Low Resolution Sediment Coring (LRC)
   QAPP to the EPA at the end of April for Agency review and comment.
- CPG anticipates final revision of the LRC QAPP based on EPA comments.
- CPG anticipates initiation of field sampling no earlier than June 2008.
- CPG anticipates meetings with EPA and the Partner Agencies to review and discuss unscoped tasks in FSP Volume 1 including water column monitoring, mudflat, and pore water sampling.
- CPG anticipates meeting with EPA and Partner Agencies on revising and finalizing draft FSP Volume 2 following receipt of 2006 FSP 2 comments from EPA.
- CPG continues to work on reference site selection criteria. Meetings with EPA and the Partner Agencies will be scheduled in the near future.
- CPG will continue to work on plans for characterization of the fish community.
- CPG will meet with EPA to review and discuss the draft Risk Assessment Framework in the near future.
- CPG will continue work to review and evaluate data needs for the LPRSA Conceptual Site Model.
- CPG anticipates conducting the remaining LPR/Newark Bay Modeling Program following approval of the CPG Modeling Team.



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(d) <u>Problems encountered and anticipated problems, actual or anticipated delays, and solutions developed and implemented to address actual or anticipated problems or delays.</u>

CPG provided comments to the EPA on February 8, 2008 regarding EPA's decision not to approve the proposed modeling team. Without approval of the modeling team, no modeling efforts are proceeding. This delay in start of modeling has implications for the overall project schedule, as modeling is a critical path activity for the project.

CPG has worked toward completion of a draft Feasibility Study Work Plan. Given the pending early action feasibility study evaluation by EPA, submission of this Work Plan to EPA is being delayed based on mutual agreement. CPG is endeavoring to evaluate potential feasibility study issues consistent with the SOW and the draft Work Plan.

EPA and CPG agreed that the preparation of a revised project schedule should be delayed until such time as a plan to conduct RI/FS tasks in 2008 is discussed and agreed upon. Therefore, CPG will develop a revised RI/FS project schedule following the RI/FS scoping meeting. It is currently anticipated that a new project schedule will be provided sometime in the second quarter of CY 2008..

If you have any questions, please contact me or Rob Law at (908) 735-9315.

Very truly yours,

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Willard F. Potter Project Coordinator

cc: Sarah Flanagan, EPA Office of Regional Counsel

William Hyatt, CPG Coordinating Counsel

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